

College of Nursing

Health Sciences Building
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC 27858-4353

252-744-6433 office
252-744-6388 fax
www.nursing.ecu.edu

September 28, 2010

Dear Provost Sheerer, Vice Chancellor Horns, and Academic Council Members:

Office of the Dean
744-6372

Business Office
744-6365

Research and Scholarship
744-6453

Community Partnerships and
Practice
744-6433

Student Recruitment
744-6417

Graduate Programs
Associate Dean
744-6422

Department of
Graduate Nursing Science
744-6463

PhD
744-6369

Undergraduate Program
Associate Dean
744-6415

Department of Undergraduate
Nursing Science (junior division)
744-6471

Department of Undergraduate
Nursing Science (senior division)
744-6370

RN-BSN
744-6470

Undergraduate Student Services
Advising
744-6477

Counseling
744-6492

Technology
Learning Resource Center
744-6432

IT Services
744-6419

Concept Integration Laboratories
744-6374

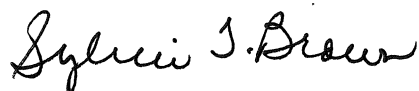
East Carolina University College of Nursing (ECUCON) has requested permission to plan and implement a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. The development of an online DNP degree is a high priority for our College and a necessity for the ongoing success of our graduate programs. The most compelling reason for development of this option is that the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has recommended the DNP degree as the entry level credential for advanced practice nurses by 2015. This has led to a dramatic increase in DNP programs across the country and there are now 120 programs in existence with an additional 160 programs in the planning phase. It is clear that this is becoming the preferred clinical degree and that advanced practice nursing students will seek this degree. Currently, we have over 450 MSN students and the majority of them are in programs that prepare them to be advanced practice nurses or nurse leaders. Without a DNP program, we believe that we will experience a decline in enrollment as students opt for the DNP rather than the master's degree.

The DNP degree is consistent with the mission of ECU and our College, it will complement existing programs, and students in this option will have a positive impact on the health of the region while they are in school and after graduation. The purpose of the DNP degree is to educate advanced practice nurses and leaders to practice evidence-based health care and translate research findings into clinical practice. While our PhD program prepares traditional nurse researchers and academicians, the DNP program is a professional degree in which the student focuses on strategies that increase the likelihood that clinicians use cutting edge research in their practice. There is a growing realization that we need to close the gap between knowledge development and clinical practice. The DNP graduate will be pivotal in closing this gap. The DNP student will be able to synthesize the literature and will serve as a link between researchers and clinicians.

As a part of their education, DNP students complete a synthesis project in which they collaborate with health care providers to address a health care problem. Many of these projects will be completed in collaboration with health care providers in the region which increases the likelihood that these students will have a positive regional impact while they are in school. Since many of our graduate students are from Eastern North Carolina and remain in the area after graduation, the work that they begin in graduate school will be sustained and augmented after graduation.

Finally, I believe the DNP program builds on the expertise of our faculty and will complement our other academic programs. Currently, there are four faculty members who either hold or are enrolled in DNP programs. These programs are located in different areas of the country and provide us with a cadre of qualified faculty who are familiar with varying methods for implementing a DNP program. The DNP program will be synergistic with our PhD program and national data from other Universities that offer both degrees has illustrated how students in these programs complement each other. Students will collaborate on the conduct as well as the implementation of research. They will collaborate with each other as well as students in other disciplines such as medicine, allied health sciences and dentistry. In summary, I believe the DNP program is critical for the ongoing success of our outstanding graduate program and it is consistent with the mission and strengths that are a part of the tradition of excellence that has been fostered at ECUCON.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sylvia T. Brown".

Sylvia T. Brown, EdD, RN, CNE
Dean and Professor

Office of the
Vice Chancellor

Health Sciences Division

Phyllis N. Horns, RN, DSN, FAAN

AD-48 Brody Medical
Sciences Building

600 Moye Boulevard

Mail Stop 600

East Carolina University

Greenville, NC 27834-4354

252-744-2984 office

252-744-3192 fax

October 7, 2010

Dear Academic Council:

This letter is in support of the East Carolina University College of Nursing's request for permission to plan and implement a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. The development of a DNP degree is essential to the future success of the clinical MSN concentrations in the College of Nursing, specifically, FNP, ANP, NNP, and Nurse Anesthesia. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has recommended the Doctor of Nursing Practice as a terminal professional degree for advanced practice nurses who are educated in the United States by 2015.

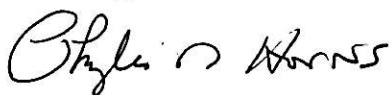
Throughout the United States, nursing programs are implementing the DNP in their offerings. In North Carolina, two private nursing schools have already made the move to augment their graduate programming and five other state supported nursing schools are moving forward to create the infrastructure to bring the DNP to their campuses.

As you know, ECU leads the state in innovative programmatic approaches to health disparities and issues related to the care of our citizens. The College of Nursing's DNP proposal allows ECU to be responsive to the educational needs of practicing nurses, through online education, while allowing us to tailor the program to complement our cadre of overwhelming successful master's program options. The DNP is proposed as a Post-Master's option which allows students to expand their graduate studies in clinical fields with a terminal, practice-oriented degree. Our MSN options will be bolstered by the advanced knowledge engendered by the DNP, but students who wish to only pursue the MSN may continue to do so until such time as the DNP is mandated as the basis for advanced practice nursing. Students in DNP program will also collaborate with other disciplines in the Health Sciences Division such as Medicine, Allied Health Sciences, and Dental Medicine.

Terminal clinical doctorate degrees are not unique to the discipline of nursing. We have seen in other health care disciplines over the years the migration of the Bachelor's degree in Pharmacy to the Pharmacy Doctorate and the Master's of Physical Therapy to the Doctor of Physical Therapy. At ECU we also award clinical doctorates for Audiology. Clinicians who are educated in terminal clinical doctorate programs are prepared to interpret research and implement evidence-based care.

The ECU College of Nursing's request for permission to plan and implement a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree is essential to the success of the clinical MSN concentrations in the College and it has my full support and endorsement.

Sincerely,



Phyllis N. Horns, RN, DSN, FAAN
Vice Chancellor for Health Sciences